

one flower-lover found time to surround his cabin with a riot of poppies, sweet-peas, nasturtiums, that in their blooming isolation reminded one of Celia Thaxter's garden on the Isle of Shoals.

Balls, concerts, church-going, theatricals, all were here as elsewhere; but daily conversation was likely to turn on samples, values, claims, silver, "boanite;" but above all, gold, gold, gold! The men down on the creeks with their primitive gold-pans and cradles, the huge monitors day and night storming Nature's earth-works at the hydraulic stands, the huge stamp-mills, crushing and pounding—all were gold-seekers.

The show nugget of Atlin, found on Boulder Creek, was put into our hands. It was as big as one's two fists put together.

Every man's undeveloped prospect is, of course, the finest thing that ever was; the only difficulty is to find a financial backer to believe in it. Companies are formed daily (in conversation); financed heavily (in conversation) by Eastern capitalists who would laugh to hear how blithely their names are used to float these conversational enterprises. When it was rumored that a quiet man looking about him, apparently at the scenery, was a representative of Clark of Montana, Atlin boomed itself ferociously. The impecunious man who had been stalled in the camp from its inception went out magnificently (in conversation) "to keep Christmas in God's country with the folks at home." Even the dreamer whose ambition had narrowed down to the desire of possessing a pair of pink-silk pajamas, went about (in conversation) thus adorned.

Here as elsewhere the men who make a living are those who work steadily, whether for wages or in independent venture, on assured ground. The men who lose are those who dream or drink and don't work. The large prizes that seem the result of accident, but that demand faith and imagination as well as experience, go to those who dream and work.

But alas! progress has been woefully retarded by litigation. When court is in session the whole population crowds into Government Building, with grievances involving ditch, flume or dredging rights, "your tailings on my claim," and the like. An agreeable neighbor called on us every evening that he was let out of jail on parole, or by mistake. Technically, his offense consisted in having "jumped a ditch." We rejoiced when he finally was acquitted, as all along he tearfully protested his spotless innocence.

A difference in nationality up there seems to be a bond of brotherhood. Dominion Day and Independence Day are kept, in beautiful paradox, on the same date, the sister flags lovingly intertwined.

It was late September. The wild roses were dead; the yellow sage-blossom withered on the bough; the hills no longer knew forget-me-not and columbine. On the dark evergreen slopes were mustard-color patches where beech and birch had turned. There were no more long twilights. When the sun fell behind the mountains, shortening the daily path by enormous strides, a darkness rose like the tide. Though the stars were radiant overhead it was impossible to distinguish the trail on which one's feet were set. One walked neck-high in Erebus.

We had to go. Soon the boats would be laid by, and all communication with the outer world be cut off till the lakes were hard-frozen enough for sled traffic. Then we should have to "mush it." The *cheechako* coveted the experience; but our party had promised to convey the Atlin exhibit to the exposition to be held at Victoria in honor of the Prince and Princess of Wales. We glided over the lake. Tawny with autumn, Atlin lay like a speck of gold-dust (by miners called "a color") on the receding shore. A prospector standing by followed my farewell glance. "Aye," he remarked, characteristically, "you bet your boots, she's an attractive little proposition!"

And then with a smile caught from the last rays of the sun, Atlin vanished behind her mountains.

NEST-BUILDERS OF THE SEA

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the nest is complete. This is the type of nest most common, and hundreds may be seen in localities affected by these fishes. Others are suspended from twigs that have become water-logged and suspended between twigs or branches or are placed beneath projecting ledges of rock. When completed, the fish hunts up his mate and drives or escorts her to the nest and presents the mansion to her. She accepts it, deposits her eggs or spawn in the interior and immediately deserts them, leaving them to the mercies of the male, who having been the house-builder now becomes the nurse.

A stickleback that I watched for days would dash at my finger if pointed at the glass and strike it so heavily that I could see him rebound. Fishes many times his size were put to flight, fairly driven from the field by this spined fury. When the eggs hatched and the young appeared his attentions were redoubled. He would place himself in the center of the nest and poise, using his fins to create a current over the eggs, aerating them and blowing away any foreign substance. The young in a short time began to wander from the nest, and I repeatedly saw the parent fish dart out and by an inhalation draw a young wanderer into

his mouth and violently project it into the nest again.

The attitude of the female is characteristic of nearly all fishes, as she plays little or no part in the domestic drama, the male being the nurse, father and mother, home-builder and protector.

A nest somewhat similar to that of the stickleback is formed by the South American fish perai. A liana or vine, dropped from a branch into the river and caught bits of refuse as it floated by, drifted and formed a pendulous mass of roots and verdure. In this the little fish placed its eggs and formed its nest, swinging from a lofty palm by a vine fifty feet in length.

For daintiness and estheticism the nest of the paradise fish will commend itself, being a fairy-like, iridescent craft floating upon the waters. One night when I left the fishes there was no evidence of a nest, but the following morning I found upon the surface a delicate raft of seeming glass. The fishes were much excited, and as they passed one another they opened their gills widely, the interior blazing out like blotches of red. In a few moments one of the fishes rose to the surface, projecting its mouth above it, then sank and ejected several bubbles,

which rose to the surface like pearls. Having been released beneath the raft, they attached themselves to it by some capillary attraction; and I found that in this manner the fairy craft was being built of air bubbles. A more dainty object it would be difficult to imagine; floating about, a mastless ship on or about which the eggs of the paradise fish were deposited, becoming attached to it in some way. Here the young found shelter when first hatched, making their first meal, it is said, though I did not observe it, from the foamy nest.

It is most interesting to watch the sunfishes of every fresh-water stream form their nests in the parterres, halls of green and gold made by the pond-lilies. One sunfish which I kept in view formed its nest, a little depression, in the sand, surrounded by weed. The fish poised over the eggs nearly all the time, darting at all possible enemies, as yellow perch or catfish, putting to flight fishes several times its size, even attacking my arm when thrust down among the weeds.

Along the rocky shores of Santa Catalina Island, California, there is a floating forest of kelp, which is the home of countless animals, among them several nest-building fishes, one a huge sculpin-like fish also called rock-cod, with large gaping mouth, colored within a brilliant blue. This fish forms a nest among the weed, selecting some rock as a central point, and attaches its eggs in a great bunch.

In the singular lump-fish the young attach themselves to the parent by their suckers at times, often following them, calling to mind a hen and chickens. In this California floating forest a singular creature called the walking-fish is found. One observed by me weighed eight or nine pounds. Its side fins resemble feet when resting on the bottom. This fish builds a remarkable floating nest, winding the seaweed up into a ball and attaching its eggs to it, the young later finding protection there.

Another species of this singular fish lives in the Sargasso Sea, where I have found its curious nest. The latter is about as large as a Dutch cheese, and is formed of the living weed rolled together. In making it, the fish swims around it and literally binds the nest into an oval or round shape by a viscid elastic white cord which it takes from a pore in the abdomen, the secretion hardening on contact with the water and resembling a white cord. The bands hold the nest firmly in shape, and the pure-white eggs, resembling shot in size, are attached to the leaves.

One of the interesting nest-builders of the Pacific Coast is the rock-bass, a fish that bears a close resemblance to a black-bass of American waters. They form their nests at Santa Catalina, along the shores of Avalon Bay, in large numbers, and may be seen poised over them, the nest being a depression in the sand, surrounded by weed.

Among the nest-builders of the floating forest previously referred to the toad-fish, or sculpin, is best-known. Its nest is of weed in a sheltered spot among the rocks, where the fish takes on the color of its surroundings, so finding protection. Here also is the nest of the kelp-fish, a marvelous mimic that not only possesses the exact color of the weed, but resembles the leaves in shape, poising among them, standing on its head and waving to and fro in the current, so mimicking the kelp that it is difficult to distinguish the fish even when directly over it and only a foot or so distant. This great forest beneath the sea, skirting the islands of Southern California, is also the home of the sheep-head, a remarkable-shaped fish with blunt head and black stripes and vivid-white lower jaw. The sheep-head forms a crude nest at the base of the kelp vines, and is a conspicuous object seen down through the windows of a glass-bottom boat as it floats over the kelpian forest.

From these few instances it will be seen that some of the fishes are the makers of more complicated nests than some birds, though they are ranked far below them in the scale of intelligence.

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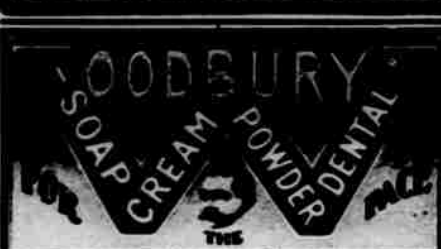
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